



## **VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center Psychology Postdoctoral Residency Program 2021-2022**

The VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center (LAACC) is excited to be offering a one year-long Psychology Postdoctoral Residency in **Trauma Psychology and Women's Mental Health**.

### **Training Setting:**

LAACC is an ambulatory care facility in the heart of downtown Los Angeles that provides comprehensive outpatient medical and mental health services to its veteran population. The LAACC psychology staff greatly value individual and cultural diversity and social justice. We endeavor to form a residency cohort with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, interests, and life experiences. Ideal applicants engage in regular self-reflection, are committed to providing patient-centered care, and bring an openness to, respect for, and appreciation of working with diverse populations.

### **Program Description:**

Training for the psychology resident will be focused primarily in LAACC Trauma Recovery Services (TRS) and the Women's Mental Health Program (WMHP). The mission of TRS is to provide assessment and evidence-based treatment to veterans who have PTSD related to military service (combat, MST, training-related, and race-based traumas). Residency will be focused on developing skills in evidence-based assessment and treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder. The resident will assess veterans through diagnostic testing (e.g., CAPS-5) to establish an accurate PTSD diagnosis. This process is followed by collaborative treatment planning, either continuing care within TRS, or determining where to refer for more appropriate care. TRS team meets weekly to discuss intakes, treatment progress and planning for veterans in the program. The core treatments offered in TRS are trauma-focused; the resident will be trained in Prolonged Exposure (PE) and Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) by licensed VA staff who are certified in these evidence-based practices. The resident may also have the opportunity for training in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), as well as treatment focused on stabilization and readiness for trauma-focused treatment, such as Skills Training in Affective and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills training. To support learning

and connection with GLA TRS trainees, the resident will participate in the weekly GLA Trauma Psychology Seminar.

Concurrent with involvement in TRS, the resident will join our Women's Mental Health Program (WMHP), serving the rapidly increasing population of women and gender-diverse veterans who come to our site for services. In the Women's Mental Health Program, the postdoctoral resident will build their capacity to provide culturally-informed assessment, treatment planning, and evidence-based treatment for a range of mental health difficulties, including mood disorders, anxiety disorders, PTSD, eating disorders, substance use disorders, sleep disorders and emotion regulation difficulties. A large subset of veterans seen in the WMHP have experienced single or multiple traumas, including combat and military sexual trauma, as well as non-military related traumatic experiences. Co-morbid mental health and medical diagnoses are also common. Treatments and training opportunities primarily include Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Prolonged Exposure (PE), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Eating Disorders (CBT-E), and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). Residents will have the opportunity to perform assessments, (intake assessments, psycho-diagnostic assessment, mental health assessments for transgender veterans seeking hormone therapy), engage in collaborative treatment planning, and conduct individual and group psychotherapy. In addition, the resident will attend committee meetings and contribute to quarterly women's events. Within the WMHP there are opportunities for program development and interdisciplinary/interprofessional collaboration with primary care medicine, social work, psychiatry, and patient education staff.

Due to the prevalence of complex trauma and difficulties with emotion regulation among veterans in both TRS and WMHP, the resident will participate in the LAACC Dialectical Behavior Therapy Team, providing both individual therapy and group skills training. Supervisors from both TRS and WMHP are a part of the DBT team. The LAACC DBT team meets weekly and is comprised of psychologists and psychology trainees from various clinics.

Other residency opportunities will include participation in the LAACC monthly Postdoctoral Residency Seminar, weekly Law & Ethics Seminar (lead by Dr. Sharon Jablon, renowned expert in licensure preparation), weekly Diversity Seminar and Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System wide day-long CE trainings (approximately four/year). Supervision of psychology pre-intern trainees may be an additional opportunity during residency.

### **Training Philosophy and Supervision:**

The VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center Psychology training program is based on the scientist-practitioner model. We believe that training is best provided through didactic training, experiential learning, and good working relationships with supervisors who can serve as models and mentors.

Supervision is provided by CA licensed psychologists.

Department of Veterans Affairs is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We honor our policy prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age, disability, genetic information, marital status, and parental status. It is the policy of VA to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Stipend & Benefits:**

- Stipend: \$52,535
- 13 days annual leave (vacation), up to 13 days sick leave, 10 Federal holidays
- Health insurance options (self and family)

**Eligibility:**

Applicants must have completed all of the requirements for the doctoral degree, including internship and dissertation. The Department of Veterans Affairs requires that the applicant's doctoral degree and internship be completed at programs *accredited by the American Psychological Association*. To be eligible, applicants must also be US citizens. Also, please note that VA employment requires that males born after December 31, 1959 must have registered for the draft by age 26.

**Application Details and Procedure:**

- **Application Deadline:** Rolling; applications will be considered until the position is filled
- **Notification Date:** Rolling; applicants will be notified
- **Start Date:** September 2021

**Application Process:**

**Please submit the following application materials to [Kimberly.Newsom@va.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Newsom@va.gov)**

1. A site-specific cover letter detailing experience and interest in these specialty areas, residency goals, as well as how this post-doctoral residency will fit into your future career goals.
2. An updated copy of your Curriculum Vitae
3. Graduate Transcripts (undergraduate transcripts are not needed)- unofficial copies are acceptable
4. Three (3) letters of recommendation
5. A letter from your Internship Training Director verifying that you are in good standing and on track for successful completion of internship *prior to September 2021*.
  - If your Internship Training Director is writing one of your letters of recommendation, please have him/her clearly state this information in the body of the letter.

- If you have already completed your internship, you may include a copy of your certificate of completion instead of a letter from your Internship Training Director.
- 6. A letter from your dissertation advisor describing the status of your dissertation and the anticipated (or completed) defense date. This letter should also indicate that your doctoral degree has been, or will be, completed *prior to September 2021*.

*VA LAACC greatly values individual and cultural diversity. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds to apply and we are an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

**If you have questions regarding this postdoctoral residency, please contact:**

Kimberly Newsom, Ph.D., Director of Psychology Training

E-mail: [Kimberly.Newsom@va.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Newsom@va.gov)

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